Reasons For Juvenile Crime- Essay, Research Paper

Reasons for Juvenile Crime-

One of the biggest problems which the United States is faced

with is juvenile crime. The reason experts feel juvenile s commit

crimes is because of risk factors when they were younger but experts

still have not found the main reason why juvenile s commit crimes.

Some risk factors associated with juvenile crime are poverty, repeated

exposure to violence, drugs, easy access to firearms, unstable family

life and family violence, delinquent peer groups, and media violence.

Especially the demise of family life, the effect of the media on the

juveniles today, and the increase of firearms available today have

played a big role in the increase of juveniles crimes.

The most common risk factor is the demise of the family life

and the increase in family violence. Between 1976 and 1992 the number

of juveniles living in poverty grew 42% and this caused an increase in

crimes by juveniles. Many of these juvenile criminals have been abused

or neglected and they also grew up in a single-parent household.

Research has found that 53% of these children are more likely to be

arrested, and 38% more likely to commit a violent crime as an adult,

then their counterparts who did not suffer such abuse. The symptoms of

child abuse are high levels of aggression and antisocial behavior

and these children are twice as likely to become juvenile offenders.

Also improper parental care has been linked to delinquency such as

mothers who drink alcohol or take drugs during pregnancy cause their

babies to grow up with learning disorders, a problem which leads them

to be juvenile criminals.

Another risk factor is the effect of the media on the

juveniles of today. Before the time a child has reached seventh grade,

the average child has witnessed 8,000 murders and 100,000 acts of

violence on the television. There is no doubt that heavy exposure to

televised violence is one of the causes of aggressive behavior, crime

and violence in society. Television violence affects youngsters of all

ages, of both genders, at all economic levels, and all levels of

intelligence. Long-term childhood exposure to television is a casual

factor behind one half of the homicides committed by juveniles

in the United States.

The increased availability of guns has played a big part in

escalating the number of crimes committed by juveniles. In Los Angeles

juvenile delinquency cases involving weapon violation grew by 86% from

1988 to 1992, which was more then any other type of juvenile offense.

According to a University of Michigan study found that 270,000 guns

accompany secondary school students to class daily. This is startling

because it shows how many more juveniles are carrying guns and the

juvenile use of guns in homicides has increased from 65 to 80 percent

from 1987 to 1991.

The possession of firearms plays a big cause in the

delinquency of children and is playing a bigger role in the crimes

which juveniles commit. Another cause of the increase of juvenile

crimes has been the effect of children seeing multiple murders and

other acts of violence on the television. Finally the demise of the

family life and the increase in family violence has been the biggest

factor in the increase of juvenile crime.